United States Department of Agriculture | Forest Service | Northeastern Area State & Private Forestry | 180 Canfield Street Morgantown, WV 26505-3101

File Code: 3410 (NA-04-21)
Date: September 21, 2004

Subject: 2004 Aerial Sketchmapping Survey

To: Mary O'Brien Reddan, Forest Supervisor
Wayne National Forest

On June 22, 23, and 24, 2004, Rick Turcotte, Adam Cumpston, and Katherine Gottschalk of Forest Health Protection (FHP), Morgantown, along with Michele Stephens and Gary Dixon, conducted an aerial sketchmapping survey of the Wayne National Forest (WNF). The accompanying maps show the general locations and types of damage observed during these flights. Table 1 lists the estimated acreage of damage observed during this survey.

This year, gypsy moth caterpillars noticeably defoliated 239 acres of oak forest within the Marietta Unit. This includes 167 acres of light defoliation detected just east of the River Trail. This area was visited this spring by Rick Turcotte, Phil Perry, John Crockett, and Art Martin based on information provided by a local timber operator. A 3 to 5 acre area of mortality was identified; the trees in this area had succumbed to a combination of defoliation, age, and borers. Because the Marietta Unit is now within the generally infested gypsy moth area, it is only a matter of time before widespread defoliation occurs. The cool, wet weather this past spring provided ideal conditions for the gypsy moth fungus, which is expected to reduce, but not eliminate, next year's populations. Past experience with the fungus and virus has shown that devastating outbreaks can still occur after epizootics have reduced the population.

It is highly recommended that the WNF review its gypsy moth management plan or work with this office to prepare one. Development of a gypsy moth management plan is needed to help prioritize areas for surveys and intervention. Even if the WNF decides not to suppress populations, it is recommended that a plan be adopted and an analysis be performed to document the "no action" alternative.

Table 1. *Estimated acreage of damage observed within the Wayne National Forest proclamation boundaries during the June 22, 23, and 24 aerial survey.*

District or Unit	Gypsy moth (acres)	Native defoliators*	Locust leafminer	Unknown+ defoliation/discoloration
Marietta	**239**	**106**	**7,753**	**2,022**
Athens	**0**	**2,121**	**7,910**	**4,624**
Ironton	**0**	**2,157**	**83**	**539**
Total	**239**	**4,384**	**15,746**	**7,185**

* Native defoliators include oak skeletonizers, looper complex, and common oak moth
+ Non-visited sites; suspected to be caused by Anthracnose leaf blights, leaf spots, locust leafminer, and native defoliators

Anthracnose leaf blights and leaf spots were again noted on the WNF along with native defoliators on a variety of hardwoods (chestnut oak, white oak, maples, sycamore, and black

locust, among others, See FHP Reports No. NA-03-10 and 17), including the locust leafminer, which appeared to be particularly heavy this year. Scattered tree mortality was observed throughout the Ironton Ranger District in the ice storm damage areas (See FHP Report No. NA-03-02).

District Rangers and other field-going personnel have the primary responsibility for on-the-ground, initial detection of insect and/or disease outbreaks. We ask that all field personnel continue to monitor for evidence of insect activity (such as an unusually high number of moths present in the forest in early spring, which may be a prelude to another heavy defoliation event by native spring defoliators), defoliation, discoloration, and mortality in their areas and report any insect and disease activity to the Morgantown Field Office.

I personally would also like to extend my appreciation to Michele and Gary for their valuable assistance in this survey. If you or any of your staff have any questions or comments regarding this survey, please contact Rick Turcotte at (304) 285-1544.

Sincerely,

JOHN W. HAZEL

Field Representative
Forest Health Protection

Cc: District Ranger, Athens RD and Marietta Unit w/enclosures
District Ranger, Ironton RD w/enclosures
RMT/AKS